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THIS DCI MEMO WAS SENT OUT.  
WE HAVE NO RECORD OF A RESPONSE  
TO THIS SUBJECT MATTER EXCEPT  
FOR POSSIBLY THE ATTACHED MEMO

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10 June 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Outside Criticism of CIA Analyses

1. There were some expressions of dissatisfaction with the Agency's strategic analysis at the recent Military Operations Research Society's convention. The purpose of this memorandum is to record what was said, and to offer my own view of its importance. (U)

2. The Strategic Forces working session held on June 3 reviewed the four major efforts undertaken last year to assess the strategic balance. The principal speaker at the session, Dr. Tom Brown, of OSD/PA&E, concluded that three of the four were relatively sophisticated, state-of-the-art analyses using the best data now available. These were the SAC, SAGA, and PA&E studies. The fourth, NIE 11-3/8, he called simplistic and superficial. Going on at some length with what he said was the need to deal with target dependent and scenario-dependent measures, Dr. Brown pointed out that the NIE did neither of these, instead it aggregated forces and "toted up beans". In such simplistic aggregations, he implied, lay the seeds of serious error. (C)

3. Brown ended his session by pointing out that only one of the four studies made it all the way to the President--the NIE. The reason, he said, was that the NIE's presentation was clear and straightforward. In this respect the other studies failed despite their sophistication. (C)

4. Another kind of criticism came from one of ACDA's senior analysts, Al Leiberman. In his view the Agency should simply refrain from doing analysis. It should be our job, he said, to provide numbers and general characteristics of forces to others who would then do the analyses. The unspecified others, he claimed, were both better positioned and better qualified to do analysis than anyone in the Agency-- which should devote all its energies to collecting and compiling data. (C)

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5. Despite the fact that the Military Operations Research Society's semi-annual conventions constitute almost the only forum in which full-fledged peer review of work in the strategic analysis field takes place, such criticisms as those above deserve to be taken with a grain of salt. In my view, it is precisely the need to communicate with a high-level audience that shapes NIE analysis. Brown conceded as much when he pointed out that problems of packaging and communication tended sometimes to be ignored in the pursuit of more and more complex analyses. As for the ACDA official's ire, it is not the first time I have heard the charge. He used the same point once before during the great Civil Defense debate of 1978 in attacking our study's conclusions, and I hear it frequently from CIA analysts complaining about NSA. (C)



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